

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 SCI-06 FEA-02 TRSE-00

INT-08 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SSO-00 DRC-01 /132 W
----- 109699

R 152230Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2498

UNCLAS OTTAWA 0138

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, TPHY, ENRG, CA

SUBJECT: CANADIAN OIL SANDS RESEARCH COMMITMENT

1. PREMIER LOUGHEED OF ALBERTA ANNOUNCED JANUARY 14 THAT ONE HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS IN PROVINCIAL FUNDS HAD BEEN COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING THE NECESSARY TECHNOLOGY TO EXTRACT THE ESTIMATED 90 PERCENT OF ALBERTA TAR SANDS OIL CONTENT THAT IS NOT PRESENTLY CONSIDERED AVAILABLE BY SURFACE MINING TECHNIQUES. (REPORTED INDUSTRY REACTION QUESTIONS HOW MUCH TECHNOLOGY CAN BE GAINED BY \$100 MILLION AND THERE ARE SUGGESTIONS THAT EXPENDITURES OF UP TO ONE BILLION DOLLARS MAY BE NECESSARY.)

2. PRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS TO DATE HAVE NOT BEEN SPECIFIC ABOUT HOW THE RESEARCH, WHICH IS TO BE FUNDED OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, WILL BE DIRECTED. AN ALBERTA OIL SANDS TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH AUTHORITY WILL BE CREATED. STAFFING PATTERNS AND RECRUITMENT OF QUALIFIED PEOPLE WILL BE SPELLED OUT THIS SPRING.

3. WHILE SOME PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT NO INVITATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS OR OTHER OIL SANDS RESEARCH PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN EXTENDED TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, OTHER PROVINCIAL GOVERN-

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MENTS, OR FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC PRIVATE INTERESTS, AND THAT IT WILL

BE AN ALBERTA GO-IT-ALONE EFFORT WITH THE AIM OF KEEPING THE DEVELOPMENT OF OIL SANDS TECHNOLOGY FIRMLY UNDER ALBERTA CONTROL, LOUGHEED IS ALSO QUOTED AS SAYING MATTER OF OUTSIDE PARTICIPATION REMAINS UNRESOLVED. (ALBERTA DOES NOT WANT TO FREEZE OUT OTTAWA" OR ANY OTHER POTENTIAL PARTICIPANT FROM THE OIL SANDS PLAY, ACCORDING TO CALGARY DATED LINE GLOBE AND MAIL STORY. PREMIER IS FURTHER ATTRIBUTED WITH REJECTING ANY SUGGESTION THAT SUDDEN ALBERTAN ACTIVITY REPRESENTS ATTEMPT TO REINFORCE SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE RESOURCES. "WE WANT TO ACT AS A CATALYST FOR OIL SANDS DEVELOPMENT. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW TECHNOLOGY AND EXPANSION OF SURFACE MINING RECOVERY WOULD GO SIDE BY SIDE WITHOUT AFFECTING OR DISCOURAGING PLANS FOR OTHER PLANTS." IN ANY EVENT, PRIVATE INDUSTRY IS TO BE CONSULTED IN ORDER TO AVOID RESEARCH DUPLICATION.

4. PREMIER LOUGHEED INDICATED TAR SANDS TECHNOLOGY COMMITMENT WAS CONSIDERED NECESSARY, AMONG OTHER REASONS, BECAUSE PRIVATE INDUSTRY HAD NOT DONE SUFFICIENT WORK NOR MOVED SWIFTLY ENOUGH TO DEVELOP AND PROVE THE NEEDED NEW IN SITU TECHNOLOGY. SCHMIDT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PETROLEUM, MINING, FIVE YEAR PLAN, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974OTTAWA00138
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740141/aaaabmgd.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 FEB 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 FEB 2002 by chappeld>; APPROVED <29 APR 2002 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CANADIAN OIL SANDS RESEARCH COMMITMENT
TAGS: TECH, TPHY, ENRG, CA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005